



Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education

CORRECTION: District names have been corrected below.

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State Finalists for 2019 Presidential Awards for Excellence Announced

LITTLE ROCK — Four Arkansas teachers were recently selected as 2019 state finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

The National Science Foundation, on behalf of The White House, oversees the program that recognizes outstanding teachers who have demonstrated a commitment to professional development, innovative teaching techniques, and technology use in their classrooms.

A total of 58 Arkansas teachers were nominated, with the following educators selected as finalists in either the math or science category. Arkansas' finalists are now eligible to be considered for recognition by the national committee.

- Carrie Beach, Washington Junior High School, Bentonville School District, Science Finalist
- Mary Hatch, Harrison Middle School, Harrison School District, Science Finalist
- Kara Lenfestey, Episcopal Collegiate School, Math Finalist
- Melodie Murray, Pocahontas High School, Pocahontas School District, Math Finalist

"It is a true honor to be considered for this prestigious, national award," Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Johnny Key said. "The jobs of our future are heavily grounded in mathematics and the sciences, making exceptional math and science teachers essential to student success in today's job market. Each of these four educators serves as a role model of excellence for their students and for our state. Congratulations to each for being named a state finalist for 2019."

Each year a national committee comprised of scientists, mathematicians, and educators recommends up to 108 teachers to receive PAEMST awards in mathematics, science, and computer science. Winners are chosen from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. territories, and schools operated in the United States and overseas by the Department of Defense Education Activity. Teachers who are selected as national PAEMST awardees each receive a \$10,000 award, a presidential citation, and a trip to Washington, DC, for a series of recognition events, professional development activities, and an awards ceremony.

The application cycle for 2020 will open soon, with the deadline to apply in April 2020. To learn more about the awards program, go to <https://www.paemst.org>.

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